



DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Coast Guard

33 CFR Part 117

[Docket No. USCG-2013-0562]

Drawbridge Operation Regulation; Inner Harbor Navigational Canal, New Orleans, LA.

AGENCY: Coast Guard, DHS.

ACTION: Notice of temporary deviation from regulations; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Coast Guard has issued a temporary deviation from the operating schedules that govern the US 90 (Danzinger) Bridge across the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal (IHNC), mile 3.1, and the Senator Ted Hickey (Leon C. Simon Blvd. /Seabrook) bridge across the IHNC, mile 4.6, both at New Orleans, LA. This deviation will test changes to the drawbridge operation schedule to determine whether a permanent change to the schedule is needed. These changes would allow for the safe navigation of vessels while reflecting the low volume of vessel traffic through the bridges thereby increasing efficiency of operations. The changes will allow the bridges to operate in a manner that will align the two operating schedules so the bridge owner

will be able to use the same bridge crew personnel to operate both bridges with little to no affect on navigation through the bridges.

DATES: This deviation is effective from 12:01 a.m. on [Insert date 15 days after publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER] through 11:59 p.m. on [Insert date 45 days after publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER].

Comments and related material must be received by the Coast Guard on [Insert date 60 days after date of publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by docket number USCG-2013-0562 using any one of the following methods:

(1) Federal eRulemaking Portal:

<http://www.regulations.gov>.

(2) Fax: 202-493-2251.

(3) Mail or Delivery: Docket Management Facility (M-30), U.S. Department of Transportation, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001. Deliveries accepted between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. The telephone number is 202-366-9329.

See the "Public Participation and Request for Comments" portion of the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section

below for instructions on submitting comments. To avoid duplication, please use only one of these four methods.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you have questions on this test deviation, call or e-mail the Coast Guard; Mr. Jim Wetherington, telephone 504-671-2128, e-mails james.r.wetherington@uscg.mil. If you have questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, call Barbara Hairston, Program Manager, Docket Operations, telephone 202-366-9826.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Public Participation and Request for Comments

We encourage you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting comments and related materials. All comments received will be posted, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov> and will include any personal information you have provided.

1. Submitting comments

If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this rulemaking (USCG-2013-0562), indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation. You may submit your comments and material online (<http://www.regulations.gov>), or by fax, mail or hand delivery, but please use only one of these means. If

you submit a comment online via <http://www.regulations.gov>, it will be considered received by the Coast Guard when you successfully transmit the comment. If you fax, hand deliver, or mail your comment, it will be considered as having been received by the Coast Guard when it is received at the Docket Management Facility. We recommend that you include your name and a mailing address, an e-mail address, or a phone number in the body of your document so that we can contact you if we have questions regarding your submission.

To submit your comment online, type the docket number [USCG-2013-0562] in the "SEARCH" box and click "SEARCH." Click on "Submit a Comment" on the line associated with this rulemaking. If you submit your comments by mail or hand delivery, submit them in an unbound format, no larger than 8½ by 11 inches, suitable for copying and electronic filing. If you submit them by mail and would like to know that they reached the Facility, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. We will consider all comments and material received during the comment period and may change the rule based on your comments.

2. Viewing comments and documents

To view comments, as well as documents mentioned in this preamble as being available in the docket, go to

<http://www.regulations.gov>, type the docket number (USCG-2013-0562) in the "SEARCH" box and click "SEARCH." Click on Open Docket Folder on the line associated with this rulemaking. You may also visit the Docket Management Facility in Room W12-140 on the ground floor of the Department of Transportation West Building, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

3. Privacy Act

Anyone can search the electronic form of comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review a Privacy Act notice regarding our public dockets in the January 17, 2008, issue of the Federal Register (73 FR 3316).

4. Public Meeting

We do not now plan to hold a public meeting. But you may submit a request for one using one of the four methods specified under ADDRESSES. Please explain why one would be beneficial. If we determine that one would aid this rulemaking, we will hold one at a time and place announced by a later notice in the Federal Register.

B. Basis and Purpose

On June 05, 2013 the Coast Guard District Eight Commander received a request from Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD), on behalf of the Orleans Levee District, to modify the operating regulations of the U.S. 90 (Danzinger) and the Senator Ted Hickey (Leon c. Simon Blvd. / Seabrook) bridges on the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal (IHNC) past the Gulf Intra-Costal Waterway (GIWW).

The US 90 (Danzinger) Bridge across the IHNC, mile 3.1, at New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Louisiana is a Vertical lift bridge with a vertical clearance of 50 feet above Mean High Water (MHW), elevation 5.0 Mean Sea Level (MSL), in the closed-to-navigation position and 120 feet MHW, elevation 5.0 MSL, in the open-to-navigation position. The Senator Ted Hickey (Leon C. Simon Blvd. /Seabrook) Bridge across the IHNC, mile 4.6, at New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Louisiana is a Bascule bridge with a vertical clearance of 46 feet above Mean High Water (MHW), elevation 5.0 Mean Sea Level (MSL), in the closed-to-navigation position and unlimited in the open-to-navigation position.

Under 33 CFR 117.458(b), the draw of the US 90 (Danzinger) Bridge, mile 3.1, shall open on signal; except

that from 8 p.m. to 7 a.m. the draw shall open on signal if at least four hours notice is given, and the draw need not be opened from 7 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. to 6: 30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Under 33 CFR 117.458(c), the draw of the Senator Ted Hickey (Leon C. Simon Blvd. /Seabrook) Bridge, mile 4.6, shall open on signal; except that from 7 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, the draw need not be opened. This operating regulation has been in effect since 2003.

This regulation would allow LDOTD to improve the systematic efficiency of bridge operations for vessels using the portions of the IHNC that are not associated with the GIWW. The changes will do this by allowing bridge operations to be accomplished with the same personnel and allowing the regulations to work with one another thereby allowing for faster response times for openings and more efficient use of the waterway and ultimately more fiscal responsibility on behalf of the owner. This test will allow for comments on a current notice of proposed rule making (NPRM) that is being run in conjunction with this test. Comments on this test and the NPRM with the same docket number will be evaluated at the same time. The bridges will return to normal operations upon completion of the test to allow for evaluation of any and all comments.

Currently, there is minimal vessel traffic (nine per month and 32 per month, respectively) in this area and land traffic would not be adversely impacted by this test as the opening times would be minimized.

The test deviation will begin at 12:01 a.m. on the date 15 days after publication in the Federal Register. It will end at 11:59 p.m. 30 days later. During this 30 day period, the US 90 (Danzinger) Bridge will open if two hours notice is given 24 hours a day; except the bridge need not open from 7 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. to 6: 30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Senator Ted Hickey (Leon C. Simon Blvd. /Seabrook) Bridge will open on signal from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and from 8 p.m. to 8 a.m. if two hours notice is given; except the bridge need not open from 7 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. to 6: 30 p.m. Monday through Friday. During this time, vessels that do not require an opening can still pass through the bridges. There are no alternate routes available. Waterway users are encouraged to comment on the test deviation and the NPRM as described above.

In accordance with 33 CFR 117.35(e), the drawbridges must return to their regular operating schedules immediately at the end of the effective period of this temporary deviation. This deviation from the operating regulations is authorized under 33 CFR 117.35.

Dated: September 23, 2013.

David M. Frank

Bridge Administrator